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Ontario Women's Directorate

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NEWSRELEASE

May 31, 2005

MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT HELPS MOBILIZE COMMUNITIES TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

\$4.6 Million to Help Women At Risk And Foster Healthy, Equal Relationships Among Youth

"All women deserve to live free of fear of violence," said Papatello. "Through our Domestic Violence Action Plan, we are tackling this horrific issue both at the beginning of the cycle — when attitudes about gender are formed — and, yes, when the violence has begun and people need help."

The government is investing \$4.6 million in 28 initiatives over three years. Research shows that attitudes about equality and gender-appropriate behaviours are typically formed in childhood. The government is providing funding for 14 initiatives that will target both children and youth, as well as the adults who influence them, and deliver positive messages through everything from video games to workshops to toolkits to new materials for the classroom. Another 14 initiatives will result in training for professionals to intervene earlier when they spot the signs of abuse.

Some of the benefits from these initiatives include:

- Skills-based education to assist Ontario judges in court cases involving violence against women
- Research, conferences and training to serve Nishnawbe-Aski Nation communities;
- Training for legal aid services professionals to identify abuse and guidelines for providing services to abused women
- Training of paramedics to recognize early signs of abuse
- Development of materials and interactive exercises for youth aged 11-14, designed to change attitudes around



TORONTO – The McGuinty government is moving forward on a range of initiatives that will mobilize communities to help prevent domestic violence from occurring and to help professionals intervene earlier when it does, Minister Responsible for Women's Issues Sandra Papatello announced today.

See more photos of the event

violence.

"People who work in areas such as health care, education, justice and community service are often in a position to identify women at risk of domestic violence," said Pupatello. "Specialized training can help them better recognize the signs, reach out and protect more women and their children."

"We are very excited about this project, which will train more than 1,000 front-line legal aid service providers and more than 4,000 lawyers and community legal workers across Ontario to better identify women who have experienced violence," said Janet Leiper, chair of Legal Aid Ontario.

"We look forward to working with Legal Aid Ontario on this initiative," added Mary Lou Fassel, director of legal services at the Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic, where Pupatello made her announcement today.

Last December, the government announced the Domestic Violence Action Plan to help prevent domestic violence. The \$66 million, four-year plan includes training for front-line workers, a public education and awareness campaign, enhanced counselling and housing supports, and improvements to the justice system. Further announcements will be made over the coming months.

"May is Sexual Assault Prevention month in Ontario," said Pupatello. "It reminds us of how much there is still to do to ensure women are free from violence in their homes and in the community."

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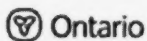
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- **Training In Key Sectors To Help Stop Domestic Violence**
- **Promoting Healthy, Equal Relationships Key To Ending Violence Against Women**

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